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TO: Members of the Appropriations Committee
FROM: Kevin Brophy, Director of Elder Law for CT Legal Services
RE: **Governor's Budget Proposal, HB 1013 and HB 6380,**
DATE: March 4, 2011

I am the Director of Elder Law for Connecticut Legal Services, a non-profit legal aid agency. My testimony is submitted on behalf of CT's low income elderly clients.

While Connecticut has a serious budgetary problem, we cannot balance the budget on the poorest and most vulnerable of our citizens. Many of our elderly clients have less than \$800.00 a month in total income. With this limited income, they are barely able to meet their basic living needs. To add additional costs, such as co-payments, may prevent them from receiving essential medical care or purchasing necessary medications. For this reason, we are opposed to:

1. Imposing cost-sharing on Medicaid services.
2. Increasing Medicare Part D Co-payments for Dually Eligible clients for covered drugs.

The State of Connecticut also has made recent strides in supporting the elderly and individuals with disabilities, who would prefer to live in the community and receive home care services, rather than live in an institution. Not only is it good public policy, it is cost effective. But, part of the Governor's proposal will discourage elders from applying for home care services or will prevent them from receiving home care services, which will lead to more vulnerable and frail individuals being admitted to nursing homes:

1. Increases cost sharing for the CT Home Program for Elders to 15%.
2. Freezes intake for Category 1 clients in state-funded CT Home Care Program.

Finally, we are opposed to a reduction in the personal needs allowance for those residing in long term care facilities from \$69 to \$60 per month. Nursing home residents need money to pay for clothes, medical expenses not covered by Medicaid, personal hygiene products, hair cuts, and the costs of a phone. Taking away \$9.00 a month from the little they are allowed to keep is overly harsh without saving the State of Connecticut any significant dollars.

